



American Federation  
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

---

AFT Teachers  
AFT PSRP  
AFT Higher Education  
AFT Public Employees  
AFT Healthcare

---

555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-879-4400  
www.aft.org

---

Randi Weingarten  
PRESIDENT

Lorretta Johnson  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Francine Lawrence  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

---

VICE PRESIDENTS

Shelvy Y. Abrams  
Mary J. Armstrong  
Barbara Bowen  
Linda Bridges  
Elsie P. Burkhalter  
Stacey Caruso-Sharpe  
Kathy A. Chavez  
Lee Cutler  
Edward Doherty  
Kathleen M. Donahue  
Marietta A. English  
Eric Feaver  
Francis J. Flynn  
Andy Ford  
David Gray  
Judy Hale  
David Hecker  
Richard C. Iannuzzi  
Fedrick C. Ingram  
Keith R. Johnson  
Jerry T. Jordan  
Dennis Kelly  
Susan M. Kent  
Ted Kirsch  
Frederick E. Kowal  
Karen GJ Lewis  
Louis Malfaro  
John McDonald  
Daniel J. Montgomery  
Michael Mulgrew  
Maria Neira  
Ruby J. Newbold  
Candice Owley  
Andrew Pallotta  
Joshua Pechthalt  
David J. Quolke  
Mary Cathryn Ricker  
Stephen Rooney  
Sandra Schroeder  
Denise Specht  
Tim Stoelb  
Ann Twomey  
Adam Urbanski

May 30, 2014

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the more than 1.5 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, I strongly urge you to oppose any effort to roll back the healthy nutrition standards in our National School Meals Program.

A recent study from the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation states that nearly 30 percent of the world's population is considered obese or overweight. Most startling, the obesity rate among children has increased by a staggering 47 percent in the last 33 years. At the same time, many American families live in communities where serving healthy food regularly is not an option. This is simply because there is no place near their homes to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. Some communities do not even have a grocery store.

These facts reinforce the need to maintain the higher nutritional standards for school meals established by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. The AFT strongly supported the law, as it encouraged moving away from "heat and serve" processed foods by lowering sodium and fats, increasing fruits and vegetables, and cooking healthy meals from scratch again in our schools. We understood those changes would lead to countless benefits for our students, such as decreases in absenteeism, optimal growth and development, increased ability to focus, improved behavior, and learning healthy eating habits they could even share with their families.

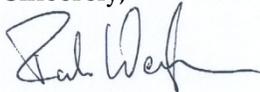
From Syracuse to Denver, from Oklahoma City to Baltimore and many places in between, we have seen the benefits of healthier meals, more school gardens, and the incorporation of nutrition into the school curriculum. Our members are on the frontlines, fighting against hunger in our schools. Our food service workers are always working—even sometimes behind the scenes—to make sure every student has something to eat, regardless of his or her meal plan status. Many of our classroom teachers keep a desk drawer or cabinet filled with food and snacks for the students they know will come to school hungry. For years, our members have supported greater access to healthier foods for students, especially those children whose only meals may be the ones they receive during school hours.

Our kids come first. That is why communities, parents, food service workers, and educators came together, demanded change, and supported access to healthier meals for all students. These standards are now in place and are working. The AFT is proud to stand with first lady Michelle Obama, advocates, parents, food service workers, teachers, school support staff and communities against any roll back of the current nutrition standards for school meals.

I strongly urge you to join us and maintain healthy meals in our schools.

Thank you for considering our views on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randi Weingarten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Randi Weingarten  
President

RW:emc opeiu#2 afl-cio